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February 21, 2006

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**FEDERAL AGENDA FOR THE SECOND SESSION OF THE 109TH CONGRESS
(3-VOTES)**

This letter recommends updated Federal goals and policies for the second session of the 109th Congress. These goals and policies, together with other positions previously adopted by your Board, would guide our Federal advocacy efforts this year. They have been developed in coordination with County Departments, the Legislative Strategist, and our Washington, D.C. advocates.

THEREFORE, IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Approve the updated overall Federal goals and policies, which seek to maximize our Federal revenues, secure greater flexibility over the use of Federal funds; lessen the impact of adverse Federal policies on County costs and decision-making authority, and revisions to previously adopted policies on Federal issues of County interest.
2. Instruct the Chief Administrative Officer, affected departments, the Legislative Strategist, and the County's Washington, D.C. advocates to work with our congressional delegation, other state and local governments, and interest groups to pursue the goals and policies in this Federal Agenda.

INTRODUCTION

The budget climate in Washington, D.C. is little changed from a year ago when the recommended Federal legislative goals and policies for the first session of the

109th Congress were presented to your Board for approval. At that time, I advised that, for the first time in many years, there was a substantial risk of major Federal spending cuts in Federal aid to state and local governments, including entitlement programs, such as Medicaid. Unfortunately, that prediction turned out to be true with even well regarded programs, such as the Community Development Block Grant, child support enforcement, and homeland security grants, being targeted for deep cuts. Moreover, for the first time since 1997, Congress passed budget reconciliation legislation to reduce entitlement (mandatory) spending, including Medicaid, child support enforcement, foster care, and Food Stamps.

Similar to last year, in 2006, the County will face major challenges to preserve its current Federal revenue, let alone increase its funding. Once again, the Administration and Congress most likely will pursue freezing or cutting spending for domestic discretionary programs for which funding is set through the annual appropriations bills as well as for entitlement programs for which spending is required by authorizing laws.

This year, other major Federal issues for the County will include legislation to reauthorize Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act, Workforce Investment Act, Older Americans Act, and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) programs, all of which are important sources of revenue for the County. In addition, Congress will be considering major telecommunications reform legislation, which could adversely affect the ability of local governments to continue to franchise and regulate local cable television services and protect consumers with respect to telecommunications services.

OVERALL FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES AND GOALS

Federal revenues account for about one-fourth of total County revenues and much of our State revenues are determined by Federal policies which govern programs, such as Medicaid, CalWORKs, and foster care. County costs also are affected directly by Federal mandates and indirectly by Federal policies on immigration, the economy, health, and welfare. Under State law, the County is mandated to provide General Relief and medical assistance to indigent residents who are ineligible for Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and other Federal public assistance programs.

In light of the State of California's continuing budget deficit, maintaining or increasing Federal funding for the State and County is even more critical. However, as noted earlier, efforts by the Administration and Congress to reduce the Federal budget deficit will make it difficult to secure additional Federal revenue. Given that total Federal aid to state and local governments is unlikely to increase, it is more important than ever that California and the County secure a greater share of available Federal resources. California is the

biggest "donor" state, paying far more in Federal taxes than it receives in Federal spending. One contributing factor is that California receives the least amount of funding per recipient of any state under Medicaid – the program which alone accounts for more than half of total Federal aid to State and local governments, nationally. California also has been hurt by inequitable allocation formulas and the growing practice of earmarking funds for specific projects which advantage states with small populations at the expense of more populous states.

Accordingly, the County's Federal Agenda has focused on the following principles:

- Maximize Federal revenues
- Secure greater flexibility over the use of Federal funds
- Lessen the impact of adverse Federal policies on County costs and decision-making authority

To achieve these overall principles, the County's current overall Federal legislative policies are to:

1. Support proposals which would provide a greater share of total available Federal funding to the County or California, and oppose proposals which would reduce the County's or State's share of total funding.
2. Support proposals which would provide local governments with greater decision-making authority over the use of Federal funds, and which provide for direct grants or mandatory pass-through allocations to large urban counties.
3. Oppose proposals which would impose new unfunded mandates on the County.
4. Oppose proposals which would finance increased spending for one program by cutting other programs of greater benefit to the County, or which would result in a net revenue loss or a cost shift to the County.
5. Support proposals to reduce or relax match requirements which hinder the ability of financially distressed state and local governments to receive or utilize Federal funds.
6. Support Federal fiscal relief for financially distressed state and local governments.

These overall legislative principles and policies have allowed the County's Washington, D.C. advocates to respond quickly to legislation and new proposals that could significantly affect the County. They also avoid the need for the Board to adopt repetitive policies to apply the same principle, such as support for a greater share of total funding, to numerous programs or policy areas.

This letter recommends that a seventh overall Federal legislative policy be added to oppose Federal preemption of State and local government authority. In recent years, there has been a growing trend of Federal preemption of state and local authority in policy areas ranging from the environment, energy, and land use to insurance, education, health care, and elections. Federal preemption limits the tools and options available to local governments, such as the County, to serve and protect their residents. This year, Congress is considering telecommunications reform legislation which would preempt the existing authority of local governments to manage public rights of way to cable television services through local franchise agreements. Just as in past years, new Federal preemption proposals may arise in other policy areas that will necessitate advocacy by the County's Washington, D.C. advocates.

SPECIFIC POLICIES ON FEDERAL ISSUES OF COUNTY INTEREST

This letter does not recommend any changes to existing Board-adopted funding priorities for individual appropriations bills, which fund discretionary programs. These funding priorities include programs, such as the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) and the Ryan White CARE Act, in which the County receives a relatively high share of total funding. They also include programs which help the County meet its responsibilities for providing essential services, such as public safety, homeland security, health, mental health, social services, employment and training, transportation, housing, and community development. Neither the County's needs nor responsibilities have changed in a way that requires any revisions to the County's appropriations priorities.

A number of changes, which are attached, are recommended to existing Board-adopted Federal legislative policies on issues of County interest. The recommendations include policies to mitigate the adverse impacts of the recently passed budget reconciliation bill's child support enforcement funding cuts and its Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) reauthorization provisions which would reduce state and local flexibility and could increase costs and/or Federal fiscal penalties for states and counties. Other recommendations are included that address issues in Ryan White CARE Act reauthorization and telecommunications reform legislation or that would enable the County to more effectively address needs and provide services. These recommended policies are generally consistent with the County's overall Federal legislative goals and principles.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The proposed goals and policies in this Federal Agenda are consistent with the County's Strategic Plan Goals, specifically Organizational Effectiveness and Fiscal Responsibility. Adoption of the proposed Agenda will allow the CAO and the County's Washington, D.C. advocates to respond quickly to legislation and proposals that could significantly affect the

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County, such as potential new mandates and changes in program funding or local flexibility over the use of Federal funds. In addition, adoption will allow pursuit of legislation, and support of proposals, related to specific program areas to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of County programs.

CONCLUSION

The recommended policies contained in this letter and the attachment are submitted for your Board's consideration as the guiding principles for our advocacy efforts in Washington, D.C. during the second session of the 109th Congress. The policies and goals contained in this package either revise or are in addition to, and are not intended to be exclusive of, other positions your Board has adopted. As in the past, the Federal Agenda will be updated to reflect any subsequent actions taken by your Board.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David E. Janssen", with a stylized flourish at the end.

DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

DEJ:GK
MAL:MT:hg/cc

Attachment

c: County Counsel
All Department Heads

ATTACHMENT

**RECOMMENDED REVISIONS TO FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE POLICIES
ADDRESSING ISSUES OF MAJOR COUNTY INTEREST**

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RECOMMENDED FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE POLICIES ADDRESSING ISSUES OF MAJOR COUNTY INTEREST

Health/Mental Health

- a. Support reform of Medicaid financing and provider payments to increase Medicaid payments, including disproportionate share hospital payments, to health safety net providers.
- b. Support reform of Medicaid payments to providers to encourage efficient use of resources and expand ambulatory care services to low-income patients without jeopardizing total available Medicaid funds.
- c. Support a more equitable allocation of Federal Medicaid funds to reduce the current disparity under which some states, such as California, receive far less Federal Medicaid funds per Medicaid recipient than other states.
- d. Support proposals which would increase California's Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP), the Federal matching rate used under the Medicaid and Title IV-E Foster Care programs.
- e. Oppose proposals which would increase the County's unreimbursed costs of providing and administering health care services, such as those which would reduce the level of Medicaid payments and the scope of Medicaid covered services and persons.
- f. Support proposals which would expand Medicaid, the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), and health insurance coverage to more persons, especially the uninsured and minors whose health needs, otherwise, must be met by the County.
- g. Support proposals which provide states with greater flexibility over the use of SCHIP funds, including to expand eligibility to cover parents and legal immigrants, expand the scope of covered services, and use community-based delivery systems without requiring Federally approved waivers. Also, support proposals which would allow California to expend or retain more of its SCHIP allotments which, otherwise, would be subject to reallocation to other states under current law.
- h. Support legislation to extend health insurance to more persons aged 55 to 64, such as by making Federal employee health benefit plans available to them.
- i. Support proposals to increase Medicare payments for graduate medical education to assist public teaching hospitals, which play a critical role in training residents.
- j. Support proposals and funding to enhance the nation's public health infrastructure and the capacity of local public hospitals and health departments to prepare for and respond to acts of terrorism and other medical and public health emergencies.

- k. Support proposals which provide funding for trauma care services.
- l. Support proposals which provide funding for capital improvements to public health facilities and clinics.
- m. Support proposals which provide funding to promote and market the availability of County health services and which improve access to health care services for the uninsured, women, and other populations with special needs.
- n. Support proposals which provide funding for urban telemedicine programs in medically underserved areas, and which would reimburse physicians in urban areas for telemedical consultations.
- o. Support proposals which would expand or improve mental health and substance abuse coverage under public and private health insurance programs.
- p. Support proposals which would allow Medicaid reimbursement for patients at institutions for mental disease (IMDs), which are hospitals, nursing facilities, or other institutions with more than 16 beds that are primarily engaged in the diagnosis, treatment, or care of persons with mental diseases.
- q. Support proposals which would increase Medicaid reimbursement of In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) costs, including allowing Medicaid payments to be made to IHSS providers who are responsible relatives of recipients.
- r. Support proposals which would expand Medicaid coverage to include the evaluation and diagnosis of learning disabilities.
- s. Support proposals requiring prior notification to state and local governments by licensed health facilities granted protection under Federal bankruptcy laws to ensure maintenance of appropriate patient care.
- t. Support proposals which allow public hospitals to access discounted pharmaceutical pricing schedules available to the Federal government.
- u. Support proposals which would increase the supply of nurses, especially registered nurses.
- v. Support proposals and funding for ~~laboratory personnel~~ education and training of health professionals, including laboratory personnel.
- w. Support legislation to reauthorize Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) programs, which would provide increased funding to California and the County.
- x. Support proposals that would provide for a more equitable allocation of Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant funds, such as by increasing the statutory

cap on the cost of service factor that adjusts block grant allotments for the relative differences in the cost of providing substance abuse services among states.

y. Support proposals that would increase funding for preventive health services, such as immunizations, early detection and diagnostic services, interconception and prenatal care, well personal care, nutrition, and health education activities.

Ryan White CARE Act Reauthorization

a. Support legislation to reauthorize Ryan White CARE Act programs that will ensure adequate appropriations and equitable distribution of resources.

b. Support proposals that would increase available funding for the County.

c. Support preservation of existing CARE Act programs, including Title I emergency assistance grants to heavily impacted areas, such as the County.

d. Support language that would allow funds to be used to provide a more comprehensive, integrated continuum of care and services that is locally determined and responsive to the needs of all individuals in need of CARE Act funded services.

e. Support maintaining the current statutorily required roles and responsibilities of planning councils under the CARE Act.

Health and Human Services Reform

a. Support proposals which would increase the number of indigent County residents who are eligible to receive Federally-funded assistance while ensuring that sponsors meet their financial obligations.

b. Support maintaining Medicaid, Food Stamps, and child support enforcement as open-ended entitlement programs.

c. Support open-ended entitlements for Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance and other funding models that promote higher priorities such as increased State and local flexibility in the expenditure of Federal funding and support achievement of better outcomes for children.

d. Support sufficient funding for health and human services reforms commensurate with any increase in services or administrative responsibilities needed to implement the reforms.

e. Support proposals and funding for welfare-to-work activities.

f. Support proposals and funding for services to non-custodial parents that strengthen their earning power, promote the payment of child support, and promote more effective parenting and greater involvement in the lives of their children.

- g. Support funding to implement and make improvements to automated data and management information systems for Federal programs administered by state and local governments.
- h. Support proposals which would simplify the administration of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, and Food Stamps.
- i. Oppose proposals that would reduce Federal or State financial participation in health and human services programs, especially when it could result in a reduction in services or shift costs to the County.
- j. Support proposals to hold state and local governments harmless from fiscal penalties when the Federal government did not provide additional funding commensurate with the cost of meeting new Federal requirements, or when the failure to meet Federal requirements resulted from factors beyond their control, such as the lack of clear program instructions.
- k. Oppose proposals which would increase the County's unreimbursed costs of providing and administering health and human services, such as reducing Federal funding or denying Federally-funded benefits to indigent County residents who will remain eligible for County-funded services.
- l. Support proposals which would enhance the County's ability to utilize Federal funds to coordinate and integrate service delivery, including, but not limited to, the sharing of costs and client information across Federal programs.
- m. Oppose new administratively imposed requirements, such as performance or quality control standards, that are not accompanied by additional Federal funding.
- n. Support proposals that would increase state and local flexibility under Section 1115 waivers, including by extending Section 1115 waiver authority to Title IV-B Child and Family Services, Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, and Title XX Social Services.
- o. Support maintaining the flexibility of states to terminate demonstration projects and state options in health and human services programs.
- p. Support proposals and funding that would promote home and community-based care for persons with disabilities who, otherwise, would require institutionalization.
- q. Support proposals to increase state and local flexibility under TANF, especially over welfare-to-work activities.
- r. Support proposals which would reduce potential increased costs or fiscal penalties for states and counties under TANF, including those that otherwise would result from increased Federal requirements.

s. Support proposals to increase Federal child support enforcement funding.

Children and Family Services

- a. Support proposals which would provide a subsidy for legal guardian relative caregivers who have assumed full time care and responsibility for abused and neglected children and avoid foster care placement for such children.
- b. Support proposals and funding which would promote income security, housing, health care, and education and vocational opportunities for youth emancipating from foster care, and which would lower the age provision of the Independent Living Program to 14 years.
- c. Support proposals which would expand Title IV-E eligibility to more abused and neglected children.
- d. Support proposals which would increase funding for foster care, adoption assistance, independent living, family preservation, child protective services, and other services to promote the safety and well being of abused and neglected children.
- e. Support proposals and funding which would implement a Child Health and Education Passport System in Los Angeles County.
- f. Support proposals which would enhance legal permanence for foster children by streamlining and/or supporting adoption and legal guardianship programs.
- g. Support proposals and funding which would improve and increase the training of child welfare, mental health, health, and other workers who provide services to children in the child welfare system.
- h. Support proposals to expedite the implementation of a comprehensive statewide automated child support system in California, mitigate the State's fiscal liability for not meeting Federal child support automation requirements, and allow fiscal penalties imposed on the State to be reinvested in the child support program.
- i. Support legislation that requires Federal agencies to update their records within five days of receipt of information from state Title IV-D child support agencies.
- j. Support proposals and funding to promote and increase intervention, prevention, training, and education in the areas of domestic violence, child abuse, and elder abuse.
- k. Support proposals which would provide for the flexible use of Title IV-E funding to provide services to abused and neglected children and their families.
- l. Support enactment of tax credits for individuals who provide in-home care to elderly parents or other family members.

m. Support proposals which provide funding for state and local governments for before and after-school programs.

n. Support proposals to provide states with increased financial incentives to pass through child support arrearages to children who receive welfare benefits.

o. Support proposals which provide funding for state and local government to increase access and availability of child care for working and low-income families, promote systems to monitor the quality of child care, and support the development and creation of child care facilities, including by allowing a portion of Child Care and Development Block Grant funds to be used to build child care facilities in areas with a shortage of licensed child care.

p. Support legislation to provide funding to local school districts to implement locally determined programs to help educate public school students with limited English proficiency.

q. Support legislation to reauthorize the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program, which maintains or increases California's percentage share of total CSBG funding, and which retains the current requirement that states pass through block grant funds to local communities.

r. Support proposals that would provide child welfare agencies, juvenile courts, and court-appointed advocates with access to educational records on children who they are serving.

Justice/Anti-Crime

a. Support the allocation of Justice Assistance Grant, juvenile justice, and other anti-crime block grant funds to local governments based on their relative need and responsibility for criminal justice activities, as measured by crime rates and criminal justice expenditures including, but not limited to, jails, courts, prosecution, incarceration, and probation.

b. Support direct grants (or the pass-through of an equitable share of state block grant funds) to counties for the development, refurbishment, or operation of correctional facilities.

c. Support the elimination of local match requirements under anti-crime and other justice assistance programs, such as the Community Oriented Policing Services program, for financially distressed local governments.

d. Support proposals to allow the County to count its unreimbursed criminal alien incarceration costs as matching funds towards any match requirement for Federal anti-crime funds.

e. Support increased Federal resources to assist County justice agencies with crime

laboratory improvements and backlog reduction, drug laundering intervention, jail automation, and tracking of criminal aliens.

f. Support increased funding for probation under Federal community policing programs, but not at the expense of currently financed law enforcement activities.

g. Support proposals which would facilitate information sharing and coordination between Federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies.

h. Support proposals to promote community prosecution programs and increase prosecutions of gun-related crimes and identity theft.

i. Support increased Federal involvement and funding to reduce gang-related crimes, and increased Federal funding for juvenile justice programs which promote a balance of funding between punitive intervention efforts and prevention investments.

j. Support proposals that make mental health intervention a component of law enforcement and the administration of justice, including training law enforcement personnel in dealing with the mentally ill, and support funding for mental health courts.

k. Support legislation which expands Federal jurisdiction to prosecute hate crimes based on gender, sexual orientation, and disability.

l. Support legislation which seeks to reduce discrimination and hate crimes, increase human relations education and training, and enhance communities' capacity to effectively address intergroup relations issues.

m. Support proposals which allow for an intercept of Federal tax refunds of probationers who owe restitution.

n. Support legislation which would provide for the cancellation of student loans for public defenders and prosecutors.

o. Support proposals and funding to expand drug courts, mental health courts, and ~~other drug~~ their related treatment programs as an alternative to incarceration.

p. Support proposals to prohibit the unauthorized use, manufacture, wearing, sale, or transfer of any official public agency badge or photographic identification card.

Housing and Homeless Assistance

a. Support proposals to maintain or increase funding to public housing authorities (PHAs), such as for capital improvements, operating subsidies, resident services, administration, and anti-crime programs in public housing.

b. Support proposals which would provide local officials with greater flexibility over the administration and use of housing funds, including greater flexibility over the use of

HOME funds, Section 8 administrative fees, Section 8 vouchers, and the membership of the governing body of the PHA.

c. Support the continued administration of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program by local PHAs, and oppose proposals which would reduce local decision-making authority or convert the Section 8 program into a block grant to states.

d. Support sufficient funding to renew all existing Section 8 vouchers at ~~Fair-Market Rent levels~~ reasonable rents for the jurisdictions served.

e. Support proposals which would simplify program administration and ease reporting requirements for public housing authorities.

f. Support proposals and funding which would increase home ownership opportunities for low and moderate income families and increase the supply of affordable housing, such as by extending the use of mortgage revenue bond proceeds for homeownership activities.

g. Support proposals which provide additional resources for meeting the housing and related supportive service needs of special populations, including elderly, disabled, and mentally ill persons.

h. Support the reauthorization of the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act and proposals which would increase local discretion over the use of homeless assistance funds, increase funding for homeless assistance programs, including supportive housing, supportive services, emergency services, and the Homeless Management Information System, and more equitably distribute funds based on relative need.

i. Support creation and funding of a national plan to end homelessness and which also addresses the needs of the homeless mentally ill.

j. Support proposals that would impede predatory lending practices.

k. Support proposals to improve the HUD ~~public-housing~~ Section 8 voucher performance measurement system, including through involving PHAs in the development of performance measures.

l. Oppose proposals which would restrict the authority of PHAs to administer housing programs, including over the selection and eviction of tenants, or which would impose costly new requirements that are not accompanied by additional resources to implement them.

m. Support proposals that would enhance the ability of PHAs to prevent fraud and collect unpaid rents, such as the creation of a central database which would allow PHAs to receive information on tenants and applicants who owe money or committed fraud on another PHA program.

Air, Water, and Resources

- a. Support measures which permit greater local flexibility in dealing with potential contamination and pollution from storm water runoff, and oppose changes in Federal law and policy which restrict the ability of the County to maintain facilities so they can function as designed.
- b. Support proposals and funding for research and development of technologies to improve water quality with respect to brackish water, chromium 6, perchlorate, methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), arsenic, radon, and disinfection byproducts.
- c. Support proposals which would improve the reliability, quality, and security of water supplies for Los Angeles County.
- d. Support amendments to the Clean Water Act which would authorize Federal funding or cost-sharing for implementing Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) standards, or which would exempt from its provisions those routine operation and maintenance activities on existing publicly-owned flood control and water conservation facilities.
- e. Support legislation which repeals the mandated use of oxygenated fuel additives, such as MTBE.
- f. Oppose proposals that would shift liability for the cost of cleaning up pollution caused by fuel additives, such as MTBE, from the private sector to state and local governments.
- g. Support proposals which provide funding to states and local governments for compliance with regulations to reduce emissions from mobile and fixed sources through efforts such as the conversion of vehicle fleets to alternative fuels.
- h. Support proposals which provide funding or tax credits for projects to improve air quality, such as by reducing toxic particulate matter emissions from diesel engines through voluntary scrap programs and the replacement or retrofit of diesel-powered vehicles and equipment.
- i. Support proposals which provide funding to state and local governments for environmental protection and restoration of watersheds, shorelines, and wetlands, land acquisition, open space, and improvements to parks, beaches, and other recreational areas.
- j. Support legislation to fund the operation and maintenance of watershed or multi-use projects.
- k. Support proposals and funding for pollution control activities, storm drain improvements, and the replacement of septic systems in the County.
- l. Oppose proposals which would reduce the amount of funds available to state and local governments from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

m. Support proposals to fully fund the Los Angeles County segment of the Army Corps of Engineers' Coast of California study and the development of long-term management plans for sediments in the Los Angeles region.

n. Support the use of a portion of funds from the Outer Continental Shelf Royalty Fund for sand replenishment, sewage treatment, urban runoff programs, and the environmental protection and restoration of watersheds, shorelines, and wetlands, and oppose initiatives to renew offshore drilling.

o. Support proposals which would authorize Federal cost-sharing of local development and rehabilitation projects as well as operations and maintenance at Federally owned and constructed flood control facilities used for regional recreation.

p. Support funding for pest prevention and eradication efforts, weed and wildlife management efforts, enhanced pesticide use enforcement and monitoring, increased surveillance of pests at ports of entry in California, and for the Sterile Insect Release program in the Los Angeles area to prevent Medfly infestations.

q. Support funding for weights and measures inspection and enforcement.

r. Support proposals that provide public agencies with immunity from liability to encourage development of multiuse watershed management, environmental restoration, open space, and recreation projects within flood protection and water conservation facilities.

s. Support proposals and funding that would assist local park agencies in their efforts to promote healthy lifestyles and activities that address the problem of obesity.

t. Support proposals and funding for partnerships between local school districts and park agencies to promote or expand after-school programs.

Utilities

a. Support efforts to ensure reasonable wholesale rates for electricity, and oppose proposals which would restrict California's efforts to solve its energy problems.

b. Support proposals to require refunds to consumers and utilities for rates charged in excess of just and reasonable levels.

c. Support efforts to establish electric utility reliability standards.

d. Oppose proposals which would restrict the ability of public agencies to use tax-exempt financing for electric co-generation.

e. Oppose proposals which would preempt state or local authority over the siting or zoning of power plants, power lines, or other utility-related infrastructure.

Communications

- a. Support proposals and funding that would enable County public safety agencies to upgrade their communications systems, utilize additional radio spectrum, implement or expand interoperable communications systems, use new communications technologies, and meet increasingly complex communications requirements.
- b. Support proposals to provide local agencies with waivers from Federal mandates to convert from broadband to narrow band communications technologies ~~or with~~ unless sufficient funding is provided to comply with the mandates.
- c. Support proposals which would assign additional radio spectrum to public safety agencies.
- d. Oppose measures which preempt local government authority over telecommunications services, such as the franchising and regulation of local cable television services, zoning of television, radio, and other telecommunications broadcast towers, and protection of consumers relating to telecommunication services.
- e. Support proposals which encourage competition ~~between local telephone companies and long distance carriers, in order to reduce costs to consumers~~ among communications providers for the full range of telephone, cable, video, internet, and broadband services.
- f. Support Federal legislation which prohibits "slamming" and "cramming" of telecommunications services, and which limits the financial liability of affected consumers.
- g. Support proposals which protect consumers from unsolicited commercial electronic mail ("spamming").
- h. Oppose measures which preempt the authority of local government to adopt policies on use of Internet services and equipment funded by the Federal E-rate telecommunication discount program.
- i. Support legislation to provide consumers with a callback number that would lift the identity block used by marketers in telephone solicitations.
- j. Support proposals to provide all public libraries with lower rates for telecommunications services, including access to the Internet.
- k. Support proposals that promote and fund nationwide availability of 2-1-1 telephone service for information and referral to human services and for other purposes.
- l. Support proposals that promote universal and affordable access to a wide range of telecommunication services.